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Thy Will be Done.

1. Go, spirit, go unto thy rest,
And be forever | with thy | God.
He calls thee to thy blest abode,
Where sin shall hurt thee | never | more.
Farewell, farewell, farewell.
2. Rest, Spirit, rest, at home with God,
Until the glorious | morning | dawn,
When God shall call for us to come,
And lay our every burden down,
Fare., &c.
3. 'Till then in duty's path we'll go,
And guided by the | Word of | God,
We'll learn to trust and "occupy,"
And say to God, Thy | will be | done.
In faith, in hope, in love.

The Primitive Church and Its Customs.

The Primitive church was not a mob in any sense; but a well-organized and systematically arranged institution. Every member's sphere was defined, and every member was expected to work in the place to which he was advanced. If a man preached where there was an organized church, he preached by authority, and not as a usurper or an intruder; if he was expected to do any work, he was informed of the fact, so that no blundering along characterized the movements of the Christian body.

The Bishop or Apostle, was the head authority in the government of the church; the elders in later ages, had charge of the teachings and divine service; the deacons looked after the temporal concerns of the church, and served as helpers to the superior clergy; and after the churches became very large in membership, men were appointed to read; others, to sing; others, to keep the doors; others to bury the dead; others, to wait upon the sick. So there was order in the house of God.

As the bishop was the absolute independent minister of the church, and did what he saw proper within the sphere the church placed him, he could perform, legally, any part of the service of the church; and nothing was done without his consent or knowledge. Great authority was placed upon him, and his responsibilities were equally great, as the following transcriptions from the constitutions show: A bishop must be no acceptor of persons; with exact justice, follow what is right; frugal, and contented with a little in his meat and drink; not costly in his diet; not given to filthy lucre; not covetous, nor rapacious; no admirer of the rich, nor hater of the poor; no evil speaker, nor false witness; not entangled with the affairs of this life; not a surety [to bail] any one, nor an accuser in suits about money; not ambitious; not double-minded, nor double-tongued; not ready to hearken to calumny or evil speaking; be gentle, gracious, mild, without guile, without falsehood, not rigid, not insolent, not severe, not arrogant, not unmerciful, not puffed up, not a man-pleaser, not timorous; esteem such food and raiment sufficient as suits necessity and decency; not luxurious in diet, nor fond of idle furniture.

These are a few of the many requirements asked of bishops, who, the church demanded, should be the most perfect per-

sons in character, and most exact in humility, simplicity, and general deportment.

The office of public preaching belonged altogether to the bishop, and was never filled by the presbyter or deacon, in his presence, unless by his order or consent; and it was even a strange thing for an elder to preach in the presence of a bishop, in the second and third centuries, or at least a portion of them. St. Austin preached when he held the title of presbyter, and it was such an unusual thing that the African churches were highly offended, and condemned the practice. In the Eastern churches the practice was different and it was no strange occurrence for the presbyters to preach in the presence of bishops. In after ages, the custom changed entirely in some localities; and it is even said that there was a time when the bishops of Rome were not known to preach for five hundred years; and Blondel tells us that when Pius Quintus gave a sermon, it was looked upon as a prodigy.

Some of the special duties other than preaching, which the bishop performed and rarely entrusted to presbyters, were reconciling penitents, confirmation of neophytes, [the newly baptized], consecration of churches, widows and virgins. These were occasionally performed by presbyters; but ordaining of the bishops and presbyters, was never entrusted to presbyters. The greatest privilege that was granted them, was to lay their hands on with the bishop. This is shown by several councils and primitive writers. St. Jerome says, in giving the privileges of the office of presbyter: What is it that the bishop does more than the presbyter, excepting the power of ordination?

St. Chrysostom says: Presbyters are admitted to preach and govern the church, and bishops are superior to them only in the power of ordination. This custom, says a writer, was so strictly adhered to, that even Novatian [the man who was the first one to receive pouring or sprinkling as baptism] would not presume to break it, but sent for three bishops from the farthest corner of Italy, rather than want a canonical number of bishops to ordain him. Thus, as Epiphanius says, bishops could beget bishops, but presbyters could only beget sons by baptism.

The primitive bishop was also expected to be a good business man. He had the oversight of the dispensation of the revenues of the church, and, in a manner, he was held responsible in seeing that no money or property was squandered or wrongly applied.

Another extensive work which the primitive bishops performed was the hearing of secular cases. Whenever two brethren would fall into difficulty in adjusting any business matter, or other personal concerns, the bishop was made the arbitrator, and required to decide what was right and just in the case. In many instances, the plaintiff and

defendant were allowed to employ elders or other brothers as counsel, and witnesses were heard, as they now are in courts of law. Many bishops were largely employed in this variety of work; and they often took the advantage of such occasions to give sound Christian advice to members who would fall into disputes. This was a very commendable practice, and accords with the teachings of St. Paul, where he directs that brethren should not go to law before the world; but call upon one of their number to sit in judgment and decide questions in dispute.

Miami Valley Items.

Through the kindness of Bro. E. S. Miller, who filled the home appointment for me, I was enabled to answer an invitation to preach a few sermons in the Shiloh church, five miles north of Dayton, near the home of brother V. E. Wampler. The people of this vicinity seem to relish Gospel alone preaching.

On the 5th, inst. I preached for the brethren in the Dayton church. This was the first time I ever entered the building since it was remodeled. It is a very neat and cozy little meeting house, and it speaks well for the zeal of the little band of brethren at this place. This little congregation has much to contend with, and any little assistance from the neighboring ministers or brethren is highly appreciated. It seems to me that the brethren living in the neighborhood of Dayton, ought to visit this little church oftener than they do. It would encourage them considerably. And undoubtedly they deserve encouragement. Come brethren, suppose you go and surprise the Dayton church every few weeks, as you did the Farmersville congregation on the evening of the 11th, you hardly know how much good you could do.

Sister Lizzie Bond receiving the sad news of the dangerous illness of a sister living in Warrensburg, Mo., left here, for that place, on the 5th. This is one of the mournful experiences of life, and where the soothing influence of Christianity can be of immense benefit.

Bro. E. S. Miller and family were visiting among members of the Farmersville congregation during the week preceding our lovefeast. The visit was much appreciated.

On the Tuesday previous to our communion meeting one more sister was added to the church by baptism.

Concerning our lovefeast on the 11th, I shall be compelled to content myself with saying that we had one. It would take up too much time and space to tell the Brotherhood all about it, how we enjoyed it, how we felt, and how the Lord blessed us with his presence. The tables were full, the Lexington and Bear Creek churches were well represented. But the great feature of the day was the deluge of brethren and sisters that came

down upon us from Bear Creek. They came and they came, until they numbered nearly forty. Several who had made great calculations on being present were unavoidably absent. We trust however that they were with us in spirit.

The abundant presence of brethren from a distance encouraged us very much. Several staid for services Sabbath morning. You need not be afraid of overtaxing our hospitality, brethren, for the Farmersville congregation seem to have an exhaustless store of that commodity for such occasions. We have also to put it to use occasionally.

The ministers of Bear Creek cheered us with their presence, with the exception of brother J. P. Martin, who was called away to preach a funeral. But we are sorry that none of them could stay to preach for us on Sunday morning.

On the 28th, we will start for Ashland and Wayne counties to enjoy four or five weeks rest among old friends. It seems from the remarks of the editors in No. 26, that they are somewhat opposed to Summer vacations. The most convincing argument that I could offer in their favor, would be for the writer of that article to come here and do eleven months of solid pastoral work—preaching three sermons weekly in Summer and a great deal more in winter, riding in a buggy from forty to a hundred miles each week in sun or storm, the many other little duties, that singly do not amount to much, but collectively take a great deal of time and labor, and then when the long month of August comes around he will be glad to go into the shade for a few weeks.

Edward Mason.

Christian Courtesy at Clover Creek, Pa.

In glancing over the columns of last week's *Messenger* we spied an article under the caption, "From Clover Creek, Blair Co., Pa." As we preach in Clover Creek, we read the article with some degree of interest. When we came to the end of the epistle, we found the name W. F. Spidle.

We have the pleasure of being personally acquainted with brother Spidle. In the article referred to, brother Spidle gives the readers of the *Messenger* a sketch of the prosperity of the German Baptist Church, at Clover Creek, and of a trip made by him and Geo. W. Brumbaugh, to the German Baptist lovefeast at Woodbury, Pa.

Brother S. goes on to say "we were warmly received by the brethren," and then further says, "the Woodbury brethren certainly have a true knowledge of what Christian courtesy is." I am glad to know this, but then you know, brother editor, it depends very much on what we think constitutes true Christian courtesy. We look through a kind of spectacles sometimes, the lens of which contracts and

dwarfs the object, and would make it appear to consist exclusively in the righteous little sphere in which we move, and have our being. Then, again, we may look through spectacles that radiate very largely, and extends "true Christian courtesy" throughout the broad sphere in which all Christians move. It depends now through which of these spectacles brother Spidle and the Woodbury church look, as to what constitutes true Christian courtesy." I take down Webster and turn to the word "Christian"—"Professing Christianity." Then I turn to the word "Courtesy"—"Politeness, civility, affability, and good breeding." Christian courtesy then means, professing Christians treating other professing Christians with politeness, civility, affability, and good breeding. Now as we live in close proximity with the Woodbury church, the kind of Christian courtesy we receive, does not have much of the Webster ring about it, it doesn't smack a bit of that blessed stuff. No sir. This is not true however, of all the professing Christians of the Woodbury church, some of them fill the bill perfectly as laid down by Webster, but some of the professing Christians of the Woodbury church will get away from you if they can, if they can not, they get two or three benches between you and them and reach over with an arm as stiff as a piece of Bessemer railroad iron and give you an affable wag as described by Webster. Meeting you upon the highway, either something unusual bites them under the left ear, and causes their head to turn the other way, or there is a remarkable display of white in the optics. Of course this is what Webster calls affable. Now, if brother Spidle means that Christian courtesy is confined in the limits of the German Baptist church, then according to our author he is wrong; but if he means to all professing Christians, then he is wrong too, for the Woodbury church, who have a "true knowledge" don't do it. What do you mean brother Spidle, anyway? W. S. Spanogle.

Martinsburg Pa.

The best thing to give to your enemy is forgiveness; to an opponent, tolerance; to a friend, your heart; to your child, a good example; to a father, deference, to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; to yourself, respect; to all men, charity.—Balfour.

As those persons who wish to sleep in the light of day generally throw something over their eyes to produce darkness, so there are persons who throw over the vision of their souls, prejudice, unbelief, pride, the imperfection of others, etc., to keep out the true light of the truth, and so prevent them turning unto God. All real and effectual hindrances to conversion are from man himself.—John Bate.